

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARAMA 01032 241616Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
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O R 241334Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4517
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY QUITO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARAMARIBO 1032

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ECIN PBOR PGOV SENV NS
SUBJ: THE AMAZON PACT

REF: A. STATE 180478; B. BRASILIA 5443

1. SUMMARY: THE SIGNING OF THE AMAZON PACT IS POLITICALLY
SIGNIFICANT TO SURINAM, AS PART OF ITS QUEST TO ESTABLISH
ITS IDENTITY AS A SOUTH AMERICAN NATION AND TO BROADEN
ITS TIES WITH BRAZIL AND VENEZUELA. THE PACT WILL
HAVE LITTLE ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE FOR SURINAM OVER THE NEAR
TERM. REACTION TO THE PACT HAS BEEN FAVORABLE IN SURINAM,
AND IT SHOULD BE RATIFIED WITHOUT MUCH DIFFICULTY. END
SUMMARY.

2. POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR SURINAM. THE SIGNING OF THE
AMAZON PACT BY SURINAM IS AN IMPORTANT INDICATION THAT IT
REGARDS ITSELF AS MORE A SOUTH AMERICAN THAN A CRIBBEAN
COUNTRY. SURINAM MAY SEE THE PACT AS ANOTHER USEFUL
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MULTILATERAL FORUM IN WHICH IT CAN INTERACT WITH THE MAJOR
POWERS IN THE REGION--BRAZIL AND VENEZUELA-- AND WITH
GUYANA, WITH WHICH IT HAS A LONG-STANDING BORDER DISPUTRE.
IN FACT, IT WILL BE RECALLED THAT THE SURINAMESE AND
GUYANESE FOREIGN MINISTERS HAD A USEFUL DISCUSSION OF
THE BORDER PROBLEM WHILE IN BRASILIA FOR THE SIGNING OF THE
PACT. THEN TOO, IT IS HARD TO SEE HOW SURINAM COULD NOT

REPEAT NOT HAVE SIGNED, GIVEN THE FACT THAT BRAZIL WANTED IT AND VENEZUELA WAS WILLING TO JOIN IN. PRIME MINISTER ARRON HAS VISITED BOTH COUNTRIES TWICE, AND PRESIDENT PEREZ ARRIVED TODAY (JULY 24) FOR THE FIRST STATE VISIT TO SURINAM FOLLOWING THE STATE VISIT OF QUEEN JULIANA. OVER THE LONG RUN SURINAM NO DOUBT VIEWS THE PACT AS A MEANS OF RECEIVING THE CONTINUING ATTENTION OF BRAZIL AND VENEZUELA AND OF DEALING WITH THEM AS THEORETICAL EQUALS.

3. ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE FOR SURINAM. THE PACT IN AND OF ITSELF WILL HAVE LITTLE ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE FOR SURINAM OVER THE NEAR TERM. IN ITS FIRST YEARS THE PACT MAY, ACCORDING TO DIRECTOR FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS HEINEMANN, HELP PROVIDE MORE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND INFORMATION ABOUT THE ECOLOGY OF THE AMAZON REGION. WITH REGARD TO THE OTHER MAJOR PROVISIONS OF THE PACT (REFTEL B, PARA SIX) IT IS DIFFICULT TO CONCEIVE OF SIGNIFICANT CONCRETE ECONOMIC OR SCIENTIFIC BENEFITS OVER THE NEAR TERM. (IT SHOULD BE NOTED IN THIS CONNECTION THAT TECHNICALLY SURINAM IS NOT PART OF THE AMAZON BASIN, BUT RATHER BORDERS UPON IT, SINCE ALL OF ITS RIVERS FLOW TO THE ATLANTIC OCEAN. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE CURRENTS FLOWING FROM THE MOUTH OF THE AMAZON DO HAVE A SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCE ON THE CLIMATE AND ECOLOGY OF THE SURINAMESE COAST.)

4. REACTION IN SURINAM. THERE HAS BEEN NO DISCERNABLE PUBLIC
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REACTION TO THE SIGNING OF THE PACT, THOUGH IT IS ASSUMED THAT MOST OF THE PUBLIC FAVORS THE IDEA OF CLOSER RELATIONS WITH THE FELLOW SOUTH AMERICAN NATIONS WHICH SIGNED IT. PRESS COVERAGE WAS FAIRLY EXTENSIVE, AS PRESS COVERAGE IN SURINAM GOES, AND WAS GENERALLY FAVORABLE, PRIMARILY BECAUSE OF THE USEFUL ROLE THE PACT MAY PLAY IN FACILITATING SURINAM'S FOREIGN POLICY GOALS.

5. PROSPECTS FOR SURINAMESE RATIFICATION. IT IS BELIEVED THAT PROSPECTS FOR PACT RATIFICATION BY THE SURINAMESE PARLIAMENT ARE VERY GOOD. PRIME MINISTER ARRON, WITH HIS PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY, CAN BE EXPECTED TO PRESS FOR RATIFICATION, AND IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THE PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION WILL MAKE AN ISSUE OF IT. ALTHOUGH SOME OPPOSITION FIGURES HAVE COMPLAINED THAT THEY WERE NOT CONSULTED BEFORE THE PACT WAS SIGNED, THE EMBASSY IS NOT AWARE OF ANY SUBSTANTITIVE OBJECTION ON THEIR PART.
OSTRANDER

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Message Attributes

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